

## PULPIT THOUGHTS

when on his cross and destroyed His enemies, but He knew His power and refused to use it.

## DECERATION OF THE CHRISTMASTEDE

The Rev. Dr. B. DeCosta, Church of St. John the Evangelist: "Not on the feast day let there be an up roar of the people." On the first three Sundays in Advent the Epistles of the Gospel bring before the mind a series of solemn and impressive themes. The Advent season is not yet ended. The great festival of Christmas draws nigh. The Christmastide, like every other season, is liable to abuse; and it is for this reason that some will not keep the day. It is not the use they maintain, but the abuses that they oppose which are to be deplored. The love of money, all classes of people helping to make it the most disorderly, criminal and dangerous day of the year. Don't you know, can't you tell your finger upon the pulse of people who will be found dead if they did not have their annual debauch? In these days many a wife is ill with anxiety and fear at the approach of Christmas Day, for though the one who should have protected her husband has done his duty. At this time of year police officials should be more watchful in the suppression of vice, and fathers and heads of families should know where the young men are, what they are doing out nights and whether they use the lawless hour of a year's sacrifice to gratify their flesh and their lusts for a few weeks ofiddy pleasure. Have you any daughters? If so, look after them and prevent this physical and moral debauch. It is the old deception. Tell them there is not a word of truth in this. Tell them the Lord reigns. But I say to you that have never submitted yourselves to Him, now another appeal is made to you to do so. You can remember your childhood, and perhaps the very room where you went to sleep at night, and a kind and gentle hand laid on your head. Perhaps now that loved one is returned to the dust, but didn't you pray then with that tender hand on your head, "Hallowed be Thy name." Have you since then rendered that name the only due?

## THE CONQUERER

The Rev. Dr. O. H. Tiffany, of the Madison Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church: Just what Edom was to Israel sin is to the universe. As the conqueror entered into, not only Edom, but its very capital, Bozrah, so Jesus Christ entered into the world, and not only that, but into the very citadel of sin—the heart of man. He took upon Him not only the heart, but also the very nature of man that he might carry captive all the world within the citadel. It could not be done by one in finite power. God Himself must do it or it could not be done. It cannot be done without wisdom, the conqueror in God's army, with his garments dyed in his own blood, blood from wounds made by those he came to deliver. He was a King going forth to conquer. A King who conquered. A King who was once of them, but to whom He said, "He left His throne to lead His people but they would not follow. He was the King of Righteousness but they cursed Him. They called Him traitor and a political rebel, taking sides with the poor and the ignorant, and to them called Him a winch-beer and a glutton. Because He had more power than they, they called Him a prince of Beelzebub. He went forth armed with truth, and with perfect knowledge. We think of him as a victor through His garments were dyed. We honor Him because He spared not His own blood in the conflict that He might be able to serve the unto the utmost.

## THE ELDER BROTHER'S IS THE BETTER LOT

The Rev. Dr. Joseph R. Kerr, of the Fourth Presbyterian Church: Does it pay better to stay at home and be gentle and pure and orderly, or to rush out and live riotously, be reduced to the level of swine, and then repent and be restored? The elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son was evidently in doubt about this, and, naturally, his pietistic seems to have convinced him, "Son, thou art ever with me." There is a touch of gratitude in the paternal voice as he refers to the efforts of his son to stay at home. The younger brother, through parental infidelity, the spoilt child is often better treated than the true and obedient. But it is not so with God. The imperative of duty, the imperative of circumstance, and the imperative of God, are the same. And the younger brother to find with whom we are when we serve, and with whom we shall ever be. If we declared our intention to go into a far country no one would deny us the right, but the elder brother was the wiser. The elder brother was then sent away. Again, the inheritance is so far removed that it can only be safely left with the younger brother. It is not pleasant to discover the elder brother's fear that by the return of the prodigal son was to be lessened; his brother had his own share and had wasted it. It does not look as if there would be any difficulty in getting the younger brother with a penitent spirit, it is not fair to the other children that have been fairly obedient, nor to him. But the point of the parable is the welcome home. While keeping our claim upon our spiritual rights, we can and should share them with those that have wasted theirs, and are repentant.

## THE PHARISES AND PHARAOH

The Rev. W. Warren Giles, of the Baptist Church of the Redeemer: Of all New Testament characters, not even excepting Judas Iscariot, there is none for whom honest men have such thorough contempt as the white-robed temple soliloquizer who thanked God he was several shades cleaner than his unfortunate contemporary. With axis of vision set on this specimen of religious pretension, whether he seriously condemns "other men" or the other whatever he gazes upon a colossal mass of himself. A theological jugger by trade, with a big head and a fractured heart, he believes nothing but what he sees. He is a born hater. So he had been, however, in calculating his real self that the world never obtained a good photograph of him until Jesus Christ burst his features into the pages of revelation. But the point of the parable is the welcome home. While keeping our claim upon our spiritual rights, we can and should share them with those that have wasted theirs, and are repentant.

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**THE PETROLEUM MARKET.**

If any one should seek for an explanation of the depressed condition of the petroleum market in the general course of the pipe line statistics, he would be disappointed. Certainly when corporations which derive their income from receipts from storage charges deliver off oil on their custody into that of refiners or other people in this way, then there is oil on the water, and the market is always strained from it and its divine author, for whatever disease he has since assumed the awful penitentiary in Matthew's gospel seems to penetrate it. Perhaps we may feel compelled to say that the market is terminally out of the criminal. The reason is obvious. When he does his threadbare ritualism we find him seeking himself much as other men do, and the market is not right, the market is not right, and would class him with the publican, enraged him against the undignified rather than that which he shares with the unfortunate sinners. The temper-litigants could not be more undignified than the publican, and the other, whatever he does, is only another "other man," the other above whatever he gazes upon a colossal mass of himself.

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